

STI BULLETIN

A publication for users of the NASA scientific and technical information program


RECONplus Alpha Testing Begins

The NASA STI program recently passed a significant milestone in the development of a text retrieval system to replace the 30-year old RECON system. Alpha testing of the RECONplus system began on April 10, 1995. Alpha testing is extremely important in the development of a system intended for general availability to a large and diverse audience. This intense testing environment allows developers to work out the "bugs," modify the design, and test the software's response to a variety of telecommunications and computing environments.

The character-based (DOS menus) and command line interfaces are currently being tested. In addition to extensive testing at the NASA Center for Aerospace Information (CASI), the RECONplus system is being alpha tested by staff from NASA center libraries. During the next few months, 30 testers will be analyzing the character-based and command line interfaces for accuracy of results and ease of use. The testers communicate comments, suggestions, and problems to the RECONplus development team using a specially designed form that tracks the comments and the developers' responses. NASA

CASI developed a special database to ensure that any changes are properly tested when the next version of the software is released.

The testers were trained in the RECONplus interfaces and the new database structure. Training began at CASI on April 5-7. Seventeen testers from nine NASA center libraries participated in this two-day session. Based on comments made by this earliest group of testers, the interfaces, documentation and training outlines were modified.

Additional participants were trained at Marshall Space Flight Center and Langley Research Center during April. The alpha test training concluded with sessions at Ames Research Center and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory during the first week of May. Staff from Dryden Flight Research Center Library and the NASA Far West Technology Transfer Center also participated in the training at JPL. The training sessions resulted in numerous comments and suggestions for change, several of which have already been implemented. The alpha test period will continue throughout the summer. Proper testing by NASA CASI staff and users will help ensure that the RECONplus system successfully meets the needs of the user community. 

CASI Seeks Beta Testers for RECONplus


During the alpha test phase of RECONplus, the development team is already seeking participants for the beta test phase. The beta test, scheduled for two months in the late summer/early fall of 1995, will be the final test phase before the RECONplus and current RECON systems are available in a parallel transition phase.

The limited number of people currently involved in the alpha test of RECONplus will be expanded in the beta test phase.


About 100 beta test participants are being sought. A broad spectrum of current RECON users and potential new users—librarians, information specialists, scientists, engineers, and project managers—from NASA, other government agencies, academia, and the private sector is needed to ensure that the system meets the users' needs.


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**Scientific and Technical
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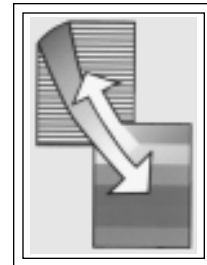
New Computerized Tracking System for Translations

The Foreign Literature Translation Service (FLTS) at the CASI is now managing all translations work using TRANSIT, a new computerized tracking system. TRANSIT (Translated Resources and Acquisitions—NASA Scientific Information Tracker) is a dBASE for Windows program that combines user-friendly Windows features with translations-specific

data to create an effective, efficient management tool.

TRANSIT monitors the entire translation process of a document—date of receipt, completion of duplicate checks, identification of an appropriate translator, and completion and delivery of the translation. This feature will enable CASI staff to provide customers with up-to-date information on the progress of any translation. Timeliness of delivery and the quality of the document are easily tracked, providing a base of information

that can be used to measure overall quality. If you have any questions about the translations services offered at CASI, or about TRANSIT, please call 301-621-0127. ◀



NASA Access Help Desk Corner



The NASA Access Help Desk provides hotline help with search techniques, telecommunications problems, document requests and other queries.

Can I order documents on RECON?

Yes. If you have access to NASA RECON, using the RECON order command is the easiest way to place document requests. You can streamline your ordering process and reduce your overall document turnaround time when serving your patrons by placing your document/video orders online via the order command.

Orders are received at the NASA Center for AeroSpace Information (CASI) almost instantaneously, eliminating the unavoidable time spent when placing orders by phone or mail. An electronic trail that will allow CASI staff to trace your request and monitor the status of your order is also immediately established. You can depend on the total accuracy of the order

information because you will be placing the order, not a middle man.

To take advantage of this speedy method of ordering, simply follow the instructions below.

Users with ordering privileges should enter the following four parameters separated with a slash. Only an accession number or set number is required. The user may type the order command as a full word (order) or an initial "o."

1. Accession number or set number.
Order 85n23640 or Order 2
2. Format of the document(s) requested.

HC - Hard copy (default)

MF - Microfiche

Both - Both hard copy and microfiche

OR - Either hard copy or microfiche

STK - Stock copy only

BETA - Beta format for video tape

VHS - VHS format for video tape

DK - Diskette

Set - Hard copy and Diskette

Order 85n23640/stk

3. Number of copies requested
(default is 1)

Order 83n23640/stk/2

4. Name of requester or special handling instructions (optional)

Order 83n23640/stk/2/John Doe Room 200 or

Order 83n23640/stk/2/

****FEDEX ****

If you have any questions about using the order command, call the NASA Access Help Desk. ◀

Help Desk Information



You can contact the NASA Access Help Desk at 301-621-0390 fax to 301-621-0134 e-mail at help@sti.nasa.gov, or write NASA Access Help Desk NASA Center for AeroSpace Information 800 Elkridge Landing Road Linthicum Heights, MD 21090-2934.

NASA Scientific and Technical Information Database Available via World Wide Web

NASA announced that free access to the vast holdings in the NASA STI Database is available via the Internet. Hundreds of thousands of bibliographic citations of aerospace-related research can be browsed on the World Wide Web (WWW) 24-hours a day. NASA STI Database topics range from aeronautics and flight simulation to physics and remote sensing. Hundreds of new citations and abstracts are posted each week from NASA technical reports, journal articles and conferences from both domestic and international sources.

By June 1995, nearly 2 million citations and abstracts will be available covering literature dating back to 1968. Citations for the documents of NASA's predecessor, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), covering 1915 to 1958 will be loaded later in the year.

The NASA Center for AeroSpace Information Technical Report Server (CASI TRS) database contains bibliographic citations and abstracts for publicly available aerospace documents, journal articles, and conference proceedings collected since 1987. The CASI TRS database is on a WAIS server using the WAIS, Inc. search engine. Access is available through Web browsers like NCSA Mosaic V.2 or NetScape. Searching of the database is done as natural language, literal strings, fielded searches, and/or Boolean queries.



New CASI Refund Policy

Effective June 1, 1995

The NASA Center for AeroSpace Information will gladly replace or make full refund on items you have requested if we have made an error in your order, if the item is defective, or if it was received in damaged condition and you contact us within 30 days of your original request. Just contact the NASA Access Help Desk.

Access to the CASI TRS and other NASA STI electronic products and services is through the NASA STI home page. The Universal Resource Locator (URL) is

<http://www.sti.nasa.gov/sti/homepage.html>

The CASI TRS database is a part of the NASA Technical Report Server (NTRS) service. NTRS, operated by the NASA Langley Research Center, is a common access point to other NASA servers and databases. The URL for the NTRS is

<http://techreports.larc.nasa.gov/cgi-bin/NTRS>

The full-text of documents cited on the CASI TRS are available in paper or on microfiche.

The NASA community can acquire materials through most NASA center libraries. Others may purchase items of interest from the NASA Center for AeroSpace Information.

For document ordering or other NASA STI information, contact the NASA Access Help Desk. ◀

CASI Seeks Beta Testers for RECONplus

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The development team encourages registered RECON users to become involved. Access to RECONplus will be free during the test period. Training, documentation and help desk support will be provided. Beta testers must provide their own equipment and telnet access/charges. Participants should be able to spend approximately five hours per month on the system, submitting comment forms and communicating with the developers as necessary.

To sign up, please contact Gail Hodge, the NASA CASI RECONplus project manager, at 301-621-0112 or ghodge@sti.nasa.gov. ▶

The *STI Bulletin*, published every other month, informs NASA STI users about the products, services, and news of the NASA Scientific and Technical Information Office.

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FIRST-CLASS PRESORT
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
NASA
Permit No. G-27

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

RECON Training Schedule

Monday, July 10, 1995

Monday, August 7, 1995

Monday, September 11, 1995

Monday, October 2, 1995

Monday, November 6, 1995

RECON users, keep this in mind: when RECONplus is up
and running, most users will need additional training.